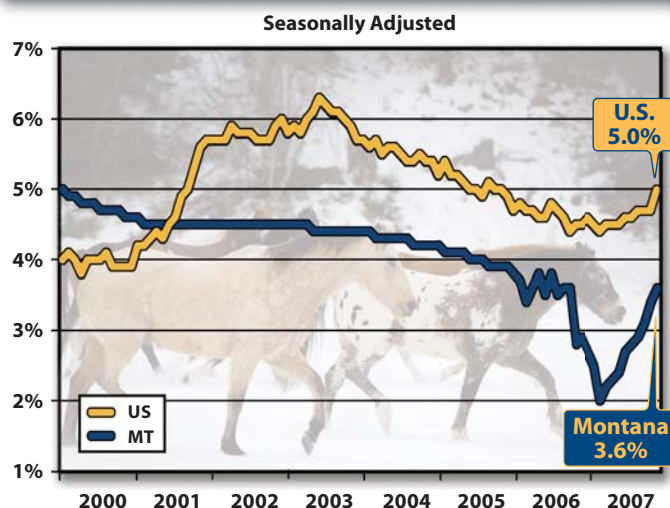


Montana Economy at a Glance

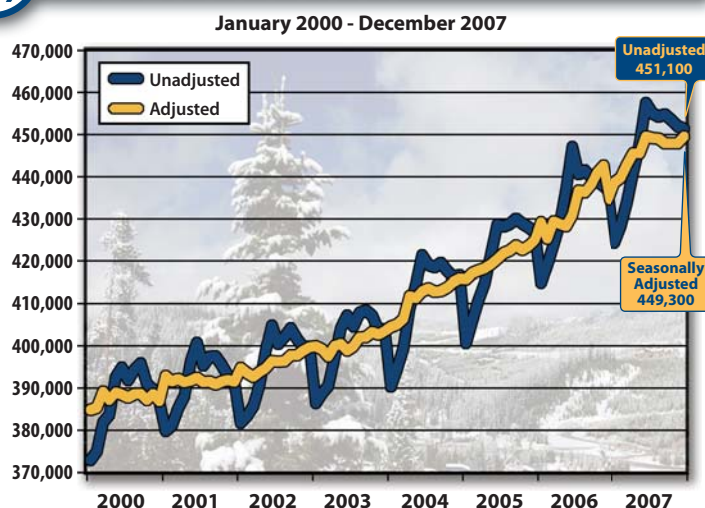
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



NONFARM EMPLOYMENT



Montana's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose to 3.6% in December 2007 from 3.4% in November. The U.S. rate also increased from 4.7% to 5.0% over the month.



Montana's seasonally adjusted nonagricultural payroll employment increased by 1,600 jobs (+0.4%) from November to December 2007. Professional and Business Services showed the largest gains, with 600 (+1.4%) added jobs. Other industries showing gains included Financial Activities, which was up by 400 jobs (+1.8%), and Leisure & Hospitality, with an additional 300 jobs (+0.5%) over the month.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Note: Does not include self-employed or agricultural employment.

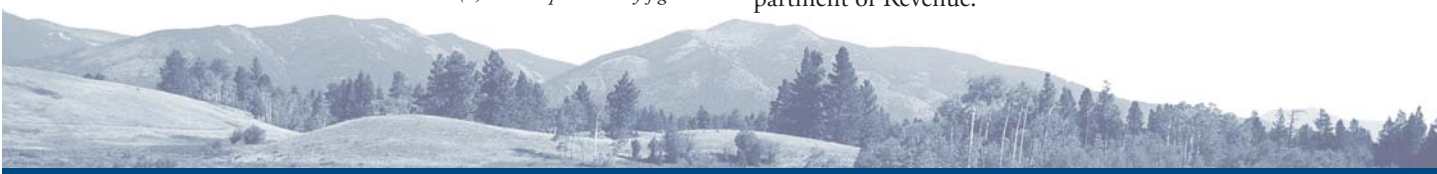
Industry Employment (in thousands)	Dec. ^(P) 2007	Nov. 2007	Net Change	Percent Change
Total Non-Agricultural	449.3	447.7	1.6	0.4%
Natural Resources & Mining	8.5	8.5	0.0	0.0%
Construction	33.2	33.4	-0.2	-0.6%
Manufacturing	20.9	21.0	-0.1	-0.5%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	92.0	91.8	0.2	0.2%
Information	7.7	7.6	0.1	1.3%
Financial Activities	23.2	22.8	0.4	1.8%
Professional & Business Services	42.5	41.9	0.6	1.4%
Education & Health Services	59.6	59.4	0.2	0.3%
Leisure & Hospitality	57.7	57.4	0.3	0.5%
Other Services	17.2	17.2	0.0	0.0%
Total Government	86.8	86.7	0.1	0.1%

(P) denotes preliminary figures

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS WELCOMES OUR NEW ECONOMIST

Montana's Research and Analysis Bureau is pleased to introduce our newest staff member, Barbara Wagner. Barbara has taken the position of Economist with the bureau.

Born and raised in Nashua, MT, Barbara received a Bachelor's degree in political science and economics from the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota, followed by a Master's Degree in applied economics from the University of Minnesota. Barbara spent 3 years working for the U.S. Senate on legislation involving agriculture, labor, trade, and transportation. Prior to her current position, she worked as a tax policy analyst for the Montana Department of Revenue.



Putting Montana "On The Map"

By Eric Johnson

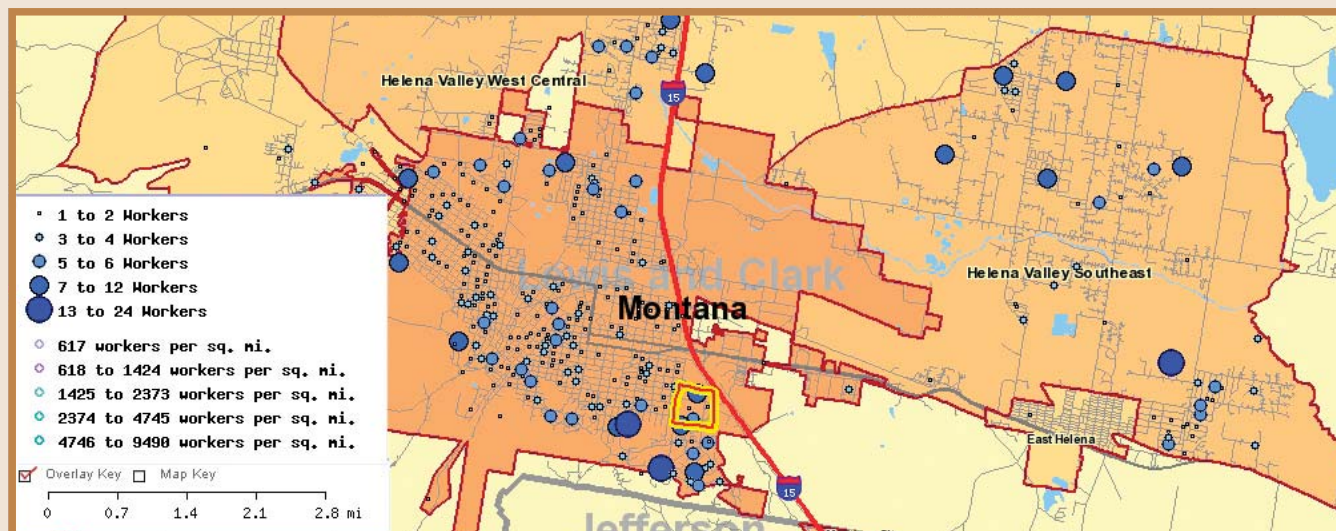
It has been said that "All roads lead to Rome." While this may have been true only in the figurative sense, it does reflect the importance that may be associated with a city or town. Being able to document that importance may be quite valuable to a variety of people such as planners, developers, business owners, and elected officials. However, facts and figures are only half the story. At some point numbers are just that: numbers on a document. But numbers translated into pictures can be far more informative.

The Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program released the first version of On The Map in February 2006. With the release of the second generation version of this application, Montana data is available, along with data for 41 other states. This is an Internet application that uses a standard Internet browser. It permits users to zoom in for small area viewing, such as neighborhoods or small towns, or zoom out to view metropolitan areas or regional labor markets. The application includes selection of geography by layers including city, zip code, county, metropolitan statistical area, and workforce investment area. The program produces three types of reports, paired area mapping, and concentric ring analysis.

The application can be used to gather data pertaining to such questions as:

1. Where are the employers in particular industries located?
2. Where are the high wage employment areas?
 - a. What industries are located in the high wage employment areas?
 - b. Where do the workers who work in high wage areas live?
3. Where are the high growth employment areas?
 - a. What industries are located in the high growth employment areas?
 - b. Where do workers who work in high growth areas live?
4. Where do workers live?
 - a. What are their characteristics?

Figure One: Helena Hospital Area Commute



Screen Shot from "On The Map" - U.S. Bureau of the Census

An example of the type of information available is contained in the Labor Shed Report. This report allows the user to select an employment area and receive a report that shows the number of jobs in the area and where the workers live. This type of information might be beneficial to employers who are trying to recruit workers, pointing out which areas and towns to cover with recruitment advertising. It might also assist disaster and emergency planners at larger employers to map most likely commuting routes for workers in the immediate area. If businesses in a work area wished to encourage alternate forms of transportation to work and ride sharing these businesses could map the work – live relationship. An example of this type of report is one which uses the hospital and medical offices area in Helena. The information is mapped (see Figure One) and is also available in report format. The map and report information may show whether or not this type of program would affect a large or small number of employees.

Information is also available by selecting a specific point and going out a chosen distance. The concentric ring analysis report was generated for Helena using the intersection of Montana Avenue, Lyndale, and Helena Avenue. The employment profile was generated for a three mile radius, fifteen mile radius, and thirty mile radius. Tables One, Two, and Three show some of the information that is generated by this report.

For a person contemplating starting a new business, this information can be valuable. A large concentration of employers and employees within a one mile radius might be good news for an individual starting a business that would cater to the lunch crowd. A fitness center might want to be located close to an area that has a higher proportion of young workers. A business might want to be located in an area where a large percentage of higher income workers are located.

**Table One - Concentric Rings Report:
Jobs By Worker Age**

	3 Miles	15 Miles	30 Miles
Age 30 or younger	6,143	6,823	7,053
Age 31 to 54	16,515	18,226	19,223
Age 55 or older	4,553	5,001	5,270

**Table Two - Concentric Rings Report:
Jobs By Earnings Paid**

	3 Miles	15 Miles	30 Miles
\$1,200/mo. or less	8,593	9,675	10,172
\$1,201 to \$3,400/mo.	12,523	13,676	14,319
More than \$3,400/mo.	6,095	6,699	7,055

**Table Three - Concentric Rings Report:
Jobs By Selected Industry Types**

	3 Miles	15 Miles	30 Miles
Ag., Fishing, and Hunting	37	119	130
Construction	1,640	2,002	2,069
Manufacturing	373	669	675
Retail Trade	3,415	3,584	3,645
Information	648	650	656
Administration, Support, & Waste Management	681	820	902
Health Care & Social Assist.	3,408	3,993	4,037
Arts, Entertainment, & Rec.	389	447	512
Accommodation & Food Service	2,481	2,709	2,746

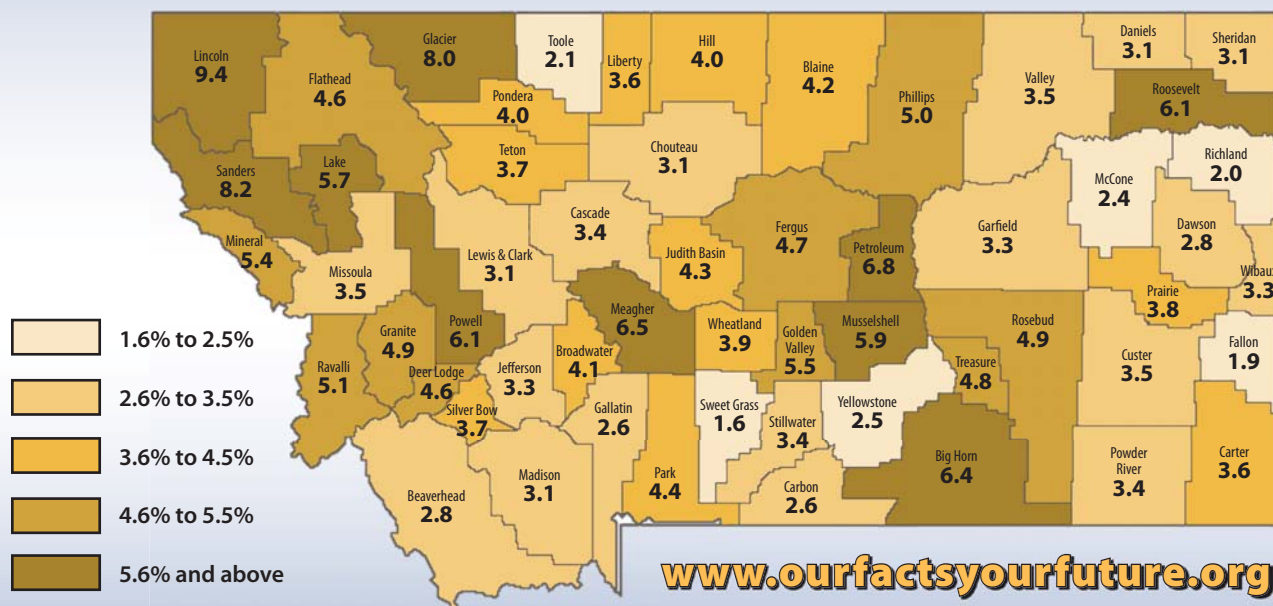
A concentric ring analysis report can give general indications that can help a person with these types of investigations.

While numbers may be convincing, seeing is believing. The display capabilities of On The Map allow the user to quickly assess the implications of the data and to visually convey this to others. This information can be paired with other products, such as county fliers, to present a powerful, fact-laden picture of a local or regional area. In this case, a picture is worth a thousand numbers.

To access "On the Map," please visit: <http://lehdmap2.did.census.gov>.

COUNTY UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)

Montana Average Rate: 3.7%



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